

This Week in Washington

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Pombo elected Chairman of Western Caucus

Congressman Richard Pombo was elected the new chairman of the House Western Caucus this afternoon. The Western Caucus, an organization of fifty-five Members of Congress, works to form one voice on issues such as Endangered Species Act reform, water rights, private property rights and other issues affecting Congressional districts in the West. Yesterday, members of the Western Caucus, including Congressman Pombo, met privately with Vice-President Dick Cheney to discuss these and other issues.

"I am proud to have the support of my colleagues," Pombo stated. "As a rancher, I know first hand that many of the laws enacted in Washington, D.C. have a disproportionate and unfair effect on us from the West. I will work together with all members of the Western Caucus to change those laws that are unfair, and to see to it that all laws are enforced equally on both sides of the Mississippi."

"I wish to thank my friend George Radanovich for his leadership as the previous chairman. George has set a solid foundation for us to build upon."

Better cash those checks FAST!

House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt suggested over the weekend that he will push to raise taxes if the Democrats win control of the House next year and the budget deficits return.

Mr. Gephardt's call for income-tax increases, reported in the Des Moines Register on Sunday, triggered a volley of criticism from Republican Party officials, who warned yesterday that the Democrats were plotting to repeal President Bush's tax cuts as soon as they returned to power.

"The ink isn't even dry on the tax-rebate checks, yet the leader of the Democrats in the House of Representatives is already plotting ways to raise taxes," said House Republican Conference Committee Chairman J.C. Watts Jr. of Oklahoma.

Speaking at a Democratic congressional fund-raising event in Des Moines on Saturday, Mr. Gephardt said Democrats "did what was right" when Congress raised income and gas taxes in 1993 under President Clinton, adding "I'll do it again" if the Democrats win control of the House in next year's midterm congressional elections.

"The differences between the two political parties couldn't be more clear: Republican passes the largest tax relief package in 20 years. And Democrats are still talking about their handiwork in 1993 the largest tax increase in American history," he said.

Reprinted from the Washington Times

Writing the Next Farm Bill:

Flexibility, Countercyclical Support, Conservation

House Agriculture Committee Members are shaping a farm bill proposal with the goal of completing Committee action by August 3. This final work is now guided by a four-page concept paper which is based upon rural community field hearings with producers and specific proposals from farm and commodity groups.

Members of the Committee have just completed series of hearings where farmer and commodity groups have commented on the concept.

Next, the Committee will move through many more days of public meetings, amendments and final legislative language of the next farm bill.

Reprinted from the House Agriculture Committee

Today in History

1775 - A postal system was established by the 2nd Continental Congress of the United States.

1788 - New York became the 11th state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

1908 - U.S. Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte issued an order that created an investigative agency that was a forerunner of the FBI.

1928 - The master auteur Stanley Kubrick was born

1945 - Winston Churchill resigned as Britain's prime minister.

1947 - U.S. President Truman signed The National Security Act. The act created The National Security Council, the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

1948 - US President Truman signed executive orders that prohibited discrimination in the US armed forces and federal employment.

1953 - Fidel Castro began his revolt against Fulgencio Batista with an unsuccessful attack on an army barracks in eastern Cuba.

1964 - Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa and six others were convicted of fraud and conspiracy in the handling of a union pension fund.

1969 - Elvis Presley opened his first live engagement in almost eight years.

1971 - Apollo 15 was launched from Cape Kennedy, FL.

From The History of Today

Political Tidbits

Protect your credit privacy

The four major credit bureaus in the US. will be allowed, starting July 1, to release your credit info, mailing addresses, phone numbers..... to anyone who requests it. If you would like to 'opt out' of this release of info, you can call 1-888-567-8688. It only takes a couple of minutes to do, and you can take care of anyone else in the household while making only one call, you'll just need to know their social security number. Be sure to listen closely, the first opt out is only for two years, make sure you wait until they prompt you to press '3' on your keypad to opt out for good. It literally takes about 2 minutes!

"Hanoi Jane" Helps DCCC.

Even as House Democratic leaders deny that they lurched too far to the left, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee held a fundraiser on Saturday with actress and activist Jane Fonda as the special guest.

The Atlanta fundraiser featured House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) and DCCC Chairwoman Nita Lowey (N.Y.), as well as Georgia Democratic Reps. John Lewis, Sanford Bishop and Cynthia McKinney.

Fonda, who recently made news with her high-profile divorce from media mogul Ted Turner, remains a somewhat controversial political figure for her decision to travel to North Vietnam in 1972 to protest American involvement in the Vietnam War. This trip earned her the nickname "Hanoi Jane" and the ire of many veterans, who still hold it against her.

Reprinted from Roll Call

Weekly Quote

"Mr. Speaker, the endangered sucker fish is living up to its reputation, sucking the livelihood from 1,400 farmers in Oregon. That is right. This protected bottom feeder now has more rights than farmers out there. If that is not enough to fry your mackerel, this region has now been without irrigated water since April, turning 200,000 acres of farmland into near desert. Beam me up. Stop this sucker fish crusade. Free these farmers. I yield back the fact that this sucker fish sucks."

- Rep. James Traficant (D-Ohio)

Weekly Humor

Political Philosophies:

(Explained in Simple "Two-Cow" Terms)

Socialism: You have two cows. You keep one, but must give the other to your neighbor.

Communism: You have two cows. The government takes both and provides you with milk.

Fascism: You have two cows. The government takes both and sells you the milk.

Bureaucracy: You have two cows. The government takes them both, shoots one, milks the other, pays you for the milk, and then pours it down the drain.

Dictatorship: You have two cows. The government takes both, then shoots you.

Capitalism: You have two cows. You sell one and buy a bull.

Democracy: You have two cows. The government taxes you to the point that you must sell them both to support a man in a foreign country who has only one cow, which was a gift from your own government.

Corporate: You have two cows. You lay one off, force the other to produce the milk of four cows, then act surprised when it drops dead.

Wordsmith

of·fi·cial·ism

Pronunciation: -'fi-sh&-"li-z&m

Function: noun

Date: 1857

: lack of flexibility and initiative combined with excessive adherence to regulations in the behavior of usually government officials

Reprinted from www.m-w.com

By the Numbers

"Just seven months after Mr. Bush took office as president, approval ratings for his wife are soaring, with a full 81 percent of Americans agreeing that Laura Bush has 'improved the image of the first lady,' according to the latest Harris Poll, released last week."

- Greg Pierce's "Inside Politics," 7/23/01